Veteran’s Upward Bound – 20 year anniversary

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Veterans looking to get back into the academic world often don’t know where to start.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham looks at a program that’s been opening doors for veterans for the past twenty years.

Veterans Upward Bound has served more than 24-hundred student veterans since it opened at WKU in 1992. It’s currently the only VUB program in Kentucky, offering resources and support to veterans seeking to achieve a higher education.

“This is my passion now.”

Kent Johnson is a junior at WKU and just got a full time job helping veteran students through the military student services department.

“I see the relief on their faces. That’s the same relief I felt.”

After high school, Johnson spent four years in the marines. His time guarding a school in Iraq made him rethink his future.

“Everyday I used to see these little children walking to school. “I don’t even think there was running water in the school, no windows and right next to a street where IED’s have been planted underneath. something about that inspired me…these little kids can do that and risk that.”

Once Kent made the decision to get a college degree he didn’t know where to start. Until he came across a pamphlet for Veterans Upward Bound.

“I knew I needed help in math and english..they gave me refresher courses. It helped me gain confidence in that way.”

Rick Wright makes sure veterans are aware of Veterans Upward Bound….

“We do a lot more than spread the brochures around the greater Bowling Green area, we go to events that attract veterans.”

….Letting them know that higher education can be a reality.

“We can help them identify a college they might want to go to. It might be WKU, it might be some other college.”

Letting veterans like Kent know the path to college can be a smooth one.

“I think the word’s getting out…there’s a lot of veterans here in town that I know are here because of Veteran’s Upward Bound.”

“We know that we’re making a big difference in people’s lives. We are changing lives for the better in a very positive way.”

The public is invited to help Veterans Upward Bound celebrate it’s 20th anniversary tomorrow at an open house from eleven am until one pm in room 129 of Jones-Jagger Hall.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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